

Making Citizens in Modern Fukui: An Aborted Attempt at Local Citizens' Cultivation

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The content of school education has always been at the center of modern school reforms. At the end of Edo period and during the early Meiji period, Fukui domain (han) and later Fukui prefecture took the initiative in modernizing their school system.

The program of “futsū no gaku” (“general education” for the samurai class in Fukui domain) established at middle schools in the Fukui domain provided its students with basic learning that widely incorporated civilian and military knowledge and can be regarded as a program for the cultivation of a civil-military elite. While the initial intention was the creation of modern schools that combined civilian and military education, this later changed to creating “civilian” (bun) schools dedicated to the cultivation of a new “citizenry” (shimin) following the dissolution of the occupational monopoly held by the samurai class over administrative and military posts. In 1871, the Fukui domain opened its schools to the general public, and common people were allowed to enter elementary school alongside members of the former samurai class. Disciples of the reformer Yokoi Shōnan had already implemented education that focused on public debate (kōron) at the local schools (gōgakusho). After the abolition of the domains and the establishment of prefectures, they promoted a process in which decisions were reached through public debate in the prefectural assembly. What set Fukui apart and ahead of the central government and other prefectures was that its “Regulations for Public Schools” provided severe penalties for those depriving others of their “right to attend school.” This kind of education through regional reform seen in Fukui came under increasing government control after 1881 and was completely contained by 1886. As the country became more centralized, a shift from the regionalized cultivation of citizens to the creation of national subjects (kokumin) occurred in the education system.

Keywords: modern Fukui; *futsū no gaku* (general education for the samurai class); *futsū gaku* (general education); common science; *kōgaku kisoku* (regulations for public schools); *kōgaku no kenri* (right to public schooling)

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Introduction

At the end of the Edo and the beginning of the Meiji period, many domains (*han*) and prefectures (*ken*) did not simply absorb the educational policies emitting from the center, but preempted the central government by implementing their own educational policies. As one example of these regional efforts at modernizing education, I will focus on the *futsū no gaku* (“general education” for the samurai class) implemented by the Fukui domain and prefecture and examine its meaning in the history of education.¹ I further consider a local variety of citizen’s education (*shimin kyōiku*) conducted at so-called “local schools” (*gōgakusho*) as well as the “Regulations for Public Schools” (*Kōgaku kisoku*) that were issued in Fukui after the promulgation of the *Gakusei* (Fundamental Code of Education) in 1872. Existing scholarship has taken the notions of *futsūgaku* and *futsū kyōiku* (both terms can be translated as general education) as key elements of modern education and has largely focused on institutional and conceptual analyses.² However, there are still very few full-fledged case studies that seek to link the pre-modern and modern periods.

Proud of its leading position among the domains related to the Tokugawa shogunate (*shinpan*), Fukui domain took the initiative in modernizing its institutions. The Meiji government felt threatened by the Fukui domain’s introduction of significant reforms such as the notion of the “equality of all social classes” (*shimin byōdō*) and “relief from samurai duties” (*bunbu no kaishoku*). Matsudaira Mochiaki, the lord of Fukui domain, had the castle moat filled in to demonstrate his obedience to the government, but the people of Fukui put up severe resistance to the government’s new system of land tax registration. After the abolition of the feudal domains (*haihan chiken*), many of the local intellectuals became involved in the movement for democratic rights. It was during this time, the end of the Edo and the beginning of the Meiji periods, that the foundation for “local citizen’s cultivation” in Fukui was laid.

In this paper, I employ the viewpoint of the localities to reexamine the promulgation of the *Gakusei* in 1872, which has been examined in much of the existing literature. It can be assumed that alongside the nationwide implementation of the *Gakusei* and the rise of school attendance, there had been a uniquely regional reform scheme that was eventually curbed and extinguished. Tracing the genealogy of citizen’s education in Fukui domain and Fukui prefecture, I show the pioneering role of Fukui, which issued early on a set of regulations for public schooling (*Kōgaku kisoku*). I further elucidate the process of the institutionalization and centralization of public education, in which the diversity of autonomous regions that recognized the value of citizens’ rights and duties was lost.

1. The Birth of “*Futsū no gaku*” in the Fukui Domain

Modern school reforms have always centered on the issue of what to include in the school curriculum. Following the Meiji Restoration, most domains introduced a two-tiered system of “general education” (*futsūgaku*) consisting of elementary and intermediate education (Kumazawa, 2007, chapter 5). Elementary school education was exemplified by the Fukuyama and Iwakuni domains, which exhorted “school attendance and study for all, including samurai, peasants, artisans, merchants” in a “general life education course” (*jinsei futsū no gakka*) from

age seven or eight. Middle schools focused strongly on educating thirteen- or seventeen-year olds in preparation for specialized training and covered a broad array of subjects. There was a variety of approaches, with some domain schools focusing solely on Western learning, while other schools offered a combination of Chinese, Japanese and Western studies. Others yet again included Western military studies in the curriculum. At Fukui's Meishinkan middle school, students aged seventeen to twenty were required to master "*futsū no gaku*", which consisted of "literature, mathematics, military studies, infantry training, artillery training, fencing, and judo."

2. Samurai Cultivation in a New Age

In Fukui domain, completion of the "*futsū no gaku*" course opened up a path to subsidized specialized training and to participation in domain administration as specialist personnel. "*Futsū no gaku*" provided the advanced learning necessary for the cultivation of modern dual civilian and military (*bunbu*) talent that the domain had been pursuing since the revival of its domain school in 1855 (Kumazawa, 2007, chapter 3).

It seems that admittance into the "*futsū no gaku*" program required highly developed academic abilities, but exceptions were also made. For instance, it was possible for those over twenty-one years of age to be admitted into the program as irregular students. One such application for status as irregular student states, "I would like to advance to the next stage in my studies. However, as I am only mediocre in nature, the study of general education is difficult for me. For this reason, I would like to become an irregular student and dedicate myself to the study of one or two subjects. I hope to be allowed to become an irregular student" (Kumazawa, 2007, 206). It is clear that "general (*futsū*)" education was a major obstacle for "ordinary" students.

Regulations for "*futsū no gaku*" that made the dual study of civilian and military subjects compulsory remained in place until the school reforms of the second month of 1871, which opened up education to the all social classes. Nishi Amane, former director of the Numazu Military Academy (*Numazu heigakkō*) (see Higuchi, 2007) in the Shizuoka domain, played an important role in the educational reforms of the Fukui domain.

3. Nishi Amane's "Common Science" and the Creation of the "Citizen"

Nishi Amane, founded his private school Ikueisha in the capital in the tenth month of 1870. At his school, Nishi provided retainers (*hanshi*) of the Fukui domain with a modern cultural education. Nishi first used the term "common science" (*futsūgaku*) in his lecture series "Encyclopedia" (*Hyakugaku renkan*) (Ōkubo, 1981, 595). In "Encyclopedia," Nishi divided learning into the two categories of "common" and "particular," explaining that "the word common refers to something related to the underlying principle of all things, and 'particular' signifies something that is focused on one thing" (Ōkubo, 1981, 35). He further differentiated between "common science" consisting of history, geography, literature, and mathematics on the one hand, and "particular science" (*shubetsugaku*), which included the hard and physical sciences, on the other. In as far as it forms the basis of all further knowledge, the "common science" expounded in Nishi's "Encyclopedia" is reminiscent of Western liberal education (see Koizumi, 1989). It may be interesting to examine the possible reasons for Nishi's use of the term "common science"?

The *Revised and Expanded Pocket Dictionary of the English and Japanese Language*, an English-Japanese dictionary widely used during the end of Edo period, defined the term “common” in the following way.

Common = usual, ordinary, shared; commoner = an ordinary person (*bonpu*), the chamber of consultation below the highest chamber of consultation in England [i.e., the House of Commons], shepherds who raise animals in cooperation with other people, undergraduate students at university (*dainikyū no gakusei*); commons = non-aristocrats, ..., the chamber of consultation below the highest chamber of consultation in England [i.e., the House of Commons]; common wealth = republican government.

Thus, the English term “common” has a large number of possible Japanese translations with social connotations.

Nishi’s concept of “common science” reflected his political ideology. In his lectures, Nishi discussed the relationship between science and art in the following way:

All people in the world create art (*jutsu*). Since science (*gaku*) necessarily rests on art, there is no one in the world who is not a scientist. For example, the headmen of villages originated in political science, peasants and dyers came out of chemistry, and carpenters emerged out of mechanics. Thus, there is no one in the realm who does not possess learning. (Ōkubo, 1981, 46–7)

Nishi situated political science at the very top of his scientific hierarchy as the discipline used to make decisions. He further listed “sagacity” (*shiki*) and “skill” (*sai*) as accompanying learning (*gakujutsu*), arguing that science (*gaku*) enhances sagacity, which is the accumulation of wisdom (*chi*), and art (*jutsu*) aids the development of skill.

Nishi used Confucian thought with its emphasis on one’s inborn nature (*tensei*) as the basis for Western learning and political theory. In “Encyclopedia,” political science belonged to what Nishi termed “studies of the principles of the heart” (*shinrijō* [*no*] *gaku*), his term for intellectual science, which in itself forms part of “particular science.” Nishi particularly praised the British constitutional system (Ōkubo, 1981, 217–8). His political ideal was not a government of the few centered on a monarch, but rather a civil society in which the majority leads through parliament while also maintaining the monarchy. Nishi was not alone in arguing in favor of the British political system and this view widely pervaded the intellectual society of the time. Nishi applied his political ideal to Japan, identifying the “commoner” as a new force that would support civilized society, and hoped that “common science” could provide the education necessary for cultivating a middle class (what Nishi referred to as *shimin*) that could function as the carrier of this future civil society.

Through Fukui retainers who had studied at Nishi’s school, transcripts of Nishi’s “Encyclopedia” also reached Matsudaira Yoshinaga, the former lord of Fukui, who praised it with the following words.

It is really necessary in the world today that government officials read this [volume], learn from it, and contemplate and put its methods into practice. I believe that in this case, the people will naturally advance steadily towards enlightenment (*kaika*) without haste. (Ōkubo,

1981, 601)

4. Popular Moral Edification Through Local Schools (*Gōgakusho*)

As part of the educational reforms carried out in the second month of 1871, the Fukui domain established elementary and middle schools that advocated the equality of all social classes. Military practice, which was the duty of Samurai, was eliminated from the formal curriculum with this reform. Preceding this, the domain had already widely established local schools (*gōgakusho*) within its territory in the ninth month of 1870 and circulated documents that called on the population to enroll their children (Fukui ken Kyoikushi kenkyushitsu, 1978, 199–201). Two of these documents that are still extant are the “Guidelines for Town Elders and Town Headmen” (*Bōchō shichō kokoroe*) and “An Outline for Education at Local Schools” (*Gōgaku kyōyu taii*), both dating to the ninth month of 1870 (Fukuiken Kyōikushi Kenkyūshitu, 1975, 35–7).

The opening passage of the “Guidelines” explained the duties of elders and headmen vis-à-vis the citizens of an area, stating, “The elders and headmen relate to the citizens (*shimin*) like officers do to ordinary soldiers. They look at them as if they were their own children, and it goes without saying that they should share their anxieties and suffering (*yūku*) as well as joy and happiness.” The document further states:

Now that new local schools have been built and moral suasion is carried out widely, it is a matter of course that citizens should attend the local schools (*gōgakusho*) and children acquire filial piety and obedience towards older family members (*kōtei*), as well as study recitation, writing, and algebra. Fathers and older brothers (*fukei*) should also attend lectures and learn how to differentiate between good and bad. All should gradually expand their knowledge, acquaint themselves with the conditions in Western countries, engage in trade with the world, and work toward the common good, regardless of whether they be esteemed or from humble origins. However, it is unnecessary that rich and poor all dedicate themselves to this project at once, and the citizenry can be divided into three classes for the time being. The richest [families] are referred to as higher households (*jōko*), the following are the middle households (*chūko*), and last come the lower households (*geko*). The differing situations of households should be taken into consideration [in regard to school attendance]. As many children as possible of middle and higher households, as well as their fathers and brothers, if their work permits, should be encouraged to attend local schools. Also, school attendance should be made voluntary in the case of the lower households. If this is implemented, then gradually the Imperial edict will be carried out, people will enter the path of virtue (*zendō*) on their own accords, adhere to international law in commerce, and their customs shall become sincere, civilized, and enlightened.

The approach of dividing citizens according to their income was something distinct to the Fukui domain. This was probably not intended as a form of discrimination against those regarded as ignorant commoners (*gumin*), but rather as a means to encourage school attendance.

“An Outline for Education at Local Schools” commented more concretely on the education for citizens mentioned in the “Guidelines for Town Elders and Headmen.”

Since local schools have been built and education introduced for all children on the occasion of the current restoration of Imperial power (*ōsei fukkō*), we have humbly received the Imperial directive that anyone who wishes so will be allowed to attend school no matter how lowly their origin. The people should not be idle in their free time (*sangyō no hima ni*), but should attend schools and lectures, apply what they hear to their own lives, discuss it with others, thoroughly elucidate its principles, and ascertain that oneself and one's conduct are in compliance with it.

This passage announces the implementation of education for all children at local schools. In addition, fathers and older brothers were also encouraged to audit classes. It further states that “it should be made certain that people should not become the least bit prideful in possessing wide knowledge” and urges people to “read books that find application in everyday life and books necessary for agriculture and commerce.” The document also propagated the necessity of practical learning related to these professions. The aim of education was to attain “the path to protect oneself and support one's family”, which also overlapped with the gist of the Imperial restoration.

Plans to establish local schools had already existed in the Fukui domain at the end of the Edo period, but only took concrete shape after the Meiji Restoration. A local school was opened in Natsume village in the fifth month of 1871 (Natsumesonshi kankō iinkai, 1966, 784). Apart from this school, six other schools could be found in the metropolitan area of Fukui city. Even after the abolition of the domains and the establishment of prefectures the establishment of local schools continued to be promoted. It has been pointed out that many of these schools were established in villages lacking educational facilities, and they became the forerunners of the elementary schools created after the promulgation of the *Gakusei* (Fukuishi, 2004, 155).

5. Egalitarianism and the End of the Occupational Monopoly Over Administrative and Military Positions by the Samurai Class

Through the educational reforms carried out by the Fukui domain in the second month of 1871, it had become possible for those not belonging to the former samurai class to attend elementary and middle schools (Monbushō, 1890, 57–61). Compared to previous times, schools put more emphasis on practical knowledge, such as basic algebra and geography.

The curriculum of middle schools was rearranged extensively as part of this reform. For instance, the subject “military education” (*bugaku*) was omitted from the lesson plan in Fukui, leaving the seven subjects “Japanese scriptures (*kōten*), Chinese texts, Western texts, algebra, fencing, judo, and horse riding training.” A note concerning “infantry and artillery (training)” reading, “While these two subjects belong to the realm of military academies, they had been temporarily attached to the middle school [curriculum] out of convenience,” was indicated in the margin of the lesson plan. The terms “civil-military subject” (*bunbu no ka*) and “*futsū no gaku*” were removed from the text, and middle schools officially ceased their function of training soldiers. Subjects aimed at fortifying the bodies of students were the only remnants of this former role.

Related to this shift from schools combining civilian and military subjects (*bunbu gakkō*) to modern purely civilian schools is the document “A Further Reform Based on the Imperial Directive to Establish a Centralized Administration” (*Gunken no goshui ni motozuki ima issō kaikaku*). This document was submitted to the central government in the fourth month of 1871

by Fukui governor Matsudaira Mochiaki in response to the new principle of the equality of all social classes. In it, Mochiaki argued for establishing equality among the four classes (samurai, peasants, artisans, merchants) through the dissolution of the monopoly over administrative and military positions formerly held by the samurai class. Following this dissolution, the newly-formed gentry (*shizoku*) class, which consisted of the former samurai, was encouraged to find a new purpose in founding enterprises.

The document further called for a reform of consciousness among former samurai (*shisotsu*) on the occasion of their changing social status.

It is a lingering evil (*yohei*) of the feudalism of old that heretofore civil and military occupations were held by the former samurai class (*shizokusotsu*) while the people (*kokumin*) remained unlearned and unskilled. Now, as this occupational monopoly of military men (*shisotsu no jōshoku*) has been dissolved and the methods of education and election have been widely established, the gentry and the common people (*shimin*) have both greatly reformed their old views, learned the principle of the equality of all people, enhanced their knowledge and skills, and are anxious to offer their talents in the service of the imperial nation.³

With this, the idea of “one path to education for all people” (*shimin itto jinzai kyōiku*) that had been propagated in the educational reforms became more of a reality. By ending the occupational monopoly of the samurai class, this group was given the same social standing as the ordinary population, and a general expansion of knowledge and the development of skills was pursued.

In the third month of 1871, the chief councilor (*daisanji*) Ogasawara Tsuyoshi of the Fukui domain met with Itagaki Taisuke, chief councilor of the Kōchi domain, and Miyajima Seiichirō, liaison officer (*kōyōnin*) in the Yonezawa domain, taking steps towards realizing the transition to a centralized administration (*gunkensei*) and parliamentary system (*giinsei*)⁴. It can be said that the dissolution of the occupational monopoly of the samurai class was the product of a supra-domainal network, and the “common science” taught by Nishi at his school Ikueisha can be regarded as an attempt to create a modern educated citizenry in the wake of this transformation.

6. Making Citizens in a Contained Area

After the abolition of the domains and the establishment of the prefectural system, the territory of the later Fukui prefecture underwent a dizzying transformation by being temporarily split up into four separate prefectures: Asuwa, Tsuruga, Ishikawa, and Shiga (Fukui, 1994, 144–72). In the year following the final establishment of Fukui prefecture in February 1881, the Prefectural Fukui Middle School opened its doors. The elementary school that had been attached to the domain school Meishinkan was deemed sufficient to serve as the basis of a public elementary school, but its middle school did not receive official approval and had to continue to exist as a private school. In the chaos created by anti-governmental movements, education in Fukui went into decline. In an attempt to improve matters, the provisional governors (*gonrei*) implemented a style of school management that emphasized consultation with government officials. This was a strategy particular to Fukui. However, it should not be overlooked that

underneath this, the centralization of education at the hands of the national government proceeded rapidly.

7. The “Regulations for Public Schools” (*Kōgaku kisoku*) of Tsuruga Prefecture

In February 1875, Yamada Taketoshi became provisional governor (*gonrei*) of Tsuruga prefecture. Yamada hailed from Kumamoto and was a former student of the scholar and reformer Yokoi Shōnan. After becoming prefectural councilor (*sanji*) in Kumamoto prefecture and serving in the Home Ministry (*Naimushō*) during 1872, he took the position of deputy governor of Tsuruga prefecture until the prefecture’s abolition in August 1876. During his tenure as deputy governor, Yamada put a system of prefectural laws in place intended to contribute to the development of the region, such as the “Regulations for Assembly Men” (*Giin kisoku*) of March 15, 1875 and “Regulations for Public Schools” discussed below. He further devoted himself to consolidating the prefectural assembly. In addition to a general intellectual atmosphere in favor of public debate (*kōron*) that existed in Fukui since Yokoi’s arrival there during the end of Edo period, these activities were probably supported by Yamada’s own philosophy of the “public” (*kōkyō*) that he had absorbed while studying with Yokoi (Shimamura, 2004, 36. Morito, 2007, 34–9). The memorandum (*kenpakusho*) he submitted in October 1875 to chancellor (*dajōdaijin*) Sanjō Sanetomi is one example of this⁵. While recognizing the exclusive rights of the central government, Yamada showed understanding for “the feelings of the people” (*minshin ni kankaku suru tokoro*), writing that “they have the right to voice their discontent in public.” Yamada’s insistence that the people have the right to express their opinion in public conveys his indebtedness to Yokoi’s “theory of public deliberation” (*kōgiron*). Moreover, Yamada’s affinity for people’s rights, also links him to the People’s Rights Movement of the day.⁶

Outstanding among Yamada’s achievements were the “Regulations for Public Schools” (Fukui, 1994, 262) issued on December 4, 1875, as Tsuruga Prefecture Administrative Order No. 133⁷. The “Regulations for Public Schools” consisted of thirty-two articles and state that “After deliberation by the ward heads, school district administrators, and school directors under this prefectural government, [this document] tentatively determines in consideration of [the decisions reached by] this assembly the general regulations for public schools as laid out in the supplementary material with the aim of further developing children’s education.” The regulations covered instruction at elementary schools, qualification requirements for prospective teachers, school facilities, and tuition fees. Articles 27 to 31 featured the heretofore unheard of phrase “right to public education” (*kōgaku no kenri*). These “Regulations” were the product of the prefectural committee for education (*kengakuji kaigi*), in which school district administrators (*gakku torishimari*) also participated.

Consideration for regional self-determination suffuses the entire text of the “Regulations.” For example, in regard to failure to attend school due to poverty, article 19 states, “Actual tuition costs are imposed on individual households, but the amount shall not be less than thirty-seven *sen* and five *rin*. Of this amount, three *sen* are used to cover teacher training at teacher academies (*denshūsho*) as before. The custom of making donations [to the schools] is to be abolished. As before, the incremental payment of tuition fees is to be conducted according to local custom. However, the fundamental idea of the rich helping the poor shall not be lost.” While tuition costs were to be carried by individual households, the implementation of mutual aid in which the rich

help the poor was recommended. Further, article 22 had the intention of encouraging children from poor families to attend school, stating, “Education for the poor will operate on the basis of half day schooling (*hannichi gakkō*). The numerous students are divided up into several classes, and it suffices if a class is dismissed immediately after two hours when the bare minimum has been taught.” Article 25 discusses activities for the enlightenment of the local population.

The full-time teacher (*kundō*) of the village school shall select one or two Sundays each month, assemble the fathers and older brothers (*fukei*) of each household and lecture on public announcements from the national government and prefectural administrative orders on the school grounds. Also, he shall confer and determine the preparations for this assembly on the selected days with the registration district head and deputy head (*sei, fuku kochō*).

Articles 27 to 31 set down regulations for official recognition as a public school. First, article 27 examines the environmental conditions of public schooling, stating, “Those officially recognized school districts that do not fulfill the requirements of a public school by not adhering to the regulations concerning full-time teachers and school facilities laid out in articles 15 to 17 and fail in their education work, lose their official recognition (*kōgaku no kenri wo ushinau*) as they do not fulfill their expected duties.” Schools that were officially recognized by the state received certain benefits, such as financial aid and facilities provided by the state. Article 28 states, “School districts (*gakku*) that have lost their official recognition do not gain the protection and support of the government in regard to the ten items of school matters listed on the left.” Article 29 states that “towns and villages that lose official recognition for their schools shall not be allowed to establish Sumō (*Kakutei*) or other forms of entertainment, or to hold performances. Even in cases of Shinto or Buddhist celebrations (*shinsai butsue*), they are not allowed to hold Shinto ceremonies (*saishiki*) or make Buddhist offerings (*kuyō*) to solicit donations.” The punitive measure of restricting entertainment and religious festivals dates to the early modern period and was employed against towns and villages that were did not adhere to regulations. Article 30 determines that “school districts that lose official recognition will be charged the minimal amount of thirty-seven *sen* and five *rin* per household as before, and this money will be collected by the prefectural administration to be used within the prefecture in support of public schooling [elsewhere].” Penalty fees were to be used to help poor children attend school. Tsuruga prefecture’s “Regulations for Public Schools” laid out a conciliatory policy in regard to the poor while simultaneously strongly demanding that school districts fulfill the requirements to receive official sanction.

8. What is Meant by “Right to Public Schooling” (*Kōgaku no kenri*)?

It is possible that the “Regulations for Public Schools” discussed above were influenced by Western precedents. For instance, the *Riji kōtei* mentioned article 17 of the “Regulations for Public Schools” (*Kōgakkō no kisoku*) found in the Prussian elementary school order, which gave the police the right to enforce school attendance. In regard to the imposition of fines for failure to attend school, it was stipulated that detailed prescriptions shall be put in place by the “authority of the government” (*seifu no ken*). This “law of compulsory school attendance” (*shūgaku kyōhaku no hō*) was aimed at students’ parents.

According to the diary of the school district administrator (*gakku torishimari*) Yoshida

Setsuzō of the remote Ōno district⁸, the entire eight articles of the draft of the “Regulations for Public Schools” in Fukui were debated and passed eight times by the prefectural council for education from November 1875 onwards. The following proposal regarding punishments for failure to attend school was debated by the council.

Of the over 70,000 boys and girls of school age under our jurisdiction, over 40,000 attend school. When considering the current cultural level of the people, this can be regarded as meaning that apart from the poor, most children attend school. ...while the trouble is great and the results few to force school attendance for the remaining children, the harm in taking no measures is also not small. Therefore, today we can either merely employ gradual exhortation [to increase school attendance], or we can establish the two following laws punishing the fathers and older brothers.

1. The fathers and older brothers who do not let their children attend school shall lose part of their public and private rights; 2. Those who employ school-age boys or girls are considered to be hindering the children’s right to schooling and an annual tax of twenty-five *sen* per person shall be levied that will be used to aid the study expenses of poor students.

However, since the penalties were deemed too heavy, the proposal was scrapped and the matter was left for further discussion at a later date. When comparing this draft to the final version of the “Regulations for Public Schools” cited above, it can be seen that the “public and private rights” (*kōshi niken*) of the fathers and older brothers mentioned in the punitive provisions referred to entertainment and religious ceremonies, and that the fee of twenty-five *sen* was a large sum. Overall, the regulations reflected the modern concept of citizens’ rights.

9. From Private to Public Schools: An Aborted Attempt at Local Citizens’ Cultivation

In contrast to its promotion of public elementary schools, the government was rather passive when it came to establishing middle schools in the provinces. There was a movement calling for the establishment of the Fukui Meishin Public Middle School (*Kōritsu Fukui Meishin chūgakkō*) during the period when Fukui turned into Ishikawa prefecture (1879), but it was in 1882 that the Provincial Fukui Middle School (*Kenritsu Fukui chūgakkō*) was eventually established through a resolution of the prefectural assembly (*Fukui kenritsu chūgakkō*, 1931, 11–3). As previously stated, the fact that anti-government forces were strong in this region was one reason for this delay, but it is probably mainly due to the fact that the Meiji government was not able to establish middle schools nation-wide right after the *Gakusei*.

Statistics found in the 1875 *Third Annual Report of the Ministry of Education* (*Monbushō daisan nenpō*) (Monbushō, 1875, 12) indicate that the vast majority of middle schools in Japan were private, with a count of only 11 public schools in contrast to 105 private ones (see Table 1). However, contrary to the expectations of the government, there was high interest among elementary school graduates for continuing their studies at public schools. The *Annual Report of Tsuruga Prefecture* (*Tsurugaken nenpō in Monbushō daisan nenpō*) dating from the same year lamented that there was no public schools for advanced education after elementary school, stating that “since middle schools have not yet been established in the provinces, it is feared that problems

Table 1 The Number of Elementary and Middle School in Meiji Era

	Number of Elementary Schools	Public (<i>Koritsu</i>)	Private (<i>Shiritu</i>)	enrollment ratio	Number of Middle Schools	State (<i>Kanritsu</i>)	Public (<i>Koritsu</i>)	Private (<i>Shiritu</i>)
1875	24,228	21,988	2,237	5.78	116	—	11	105
1876	24,947	23,487	1,460	6.18	201	—	18	183
1877	25,459	24,281	1,178	6.49	389	—	31	358
1878	26,584	25,394	1,190	6.66	579	—	65	514
1879	28,025	26,710	1,315	6.73	784	—	107	677
1880	28,410	27,427	983	6.93	187	—	137	50
1881	28,742	27,987	755	7.42	173	1	158	14
1882	29,081	28,443	638	8.20	173	1	163	9

From *The Annual Report of the Ministry of Education*

will arise for the future studies [of students]. Therefore, it is henceforth necessary to establish one or two irregular schools (*hensoku gakkō*) in expedient locations within the prefecture and engage in teaching somewhat more advanced disciplines.” (Monbushō, 1875, 257).

The section concerning Ishikawa prefecture in the *Sixth Annual Report of the Ministry of Education* (*Monbushō dairoku nenpō*) from 1878 presented middle school education in Fukui as “entirely resulting from the people’s initiative.” (Monbushō, 1878, 139). The middle school that had emerged out of the old domain school Meishinkan ceased operations in 1876, and in 1878, during the period when Fukui prefecture had been reformed as Ishikawa prefecture, a municipal middle school opened its doors due to donations made by the Matsudaira clan. The *Eighth Annual Report of the Ministry of Education* (*Monbushō daihachi nenpō*) stated that many private schools do not meet the standards required of a middle school and that more than 600 private middle schools closed as a result (Monbushō, 1880, 1–2). In fact, the number of private schools decreased to a mere 50 in 1880 from 677 in the previous year. With a count of 137 public schools in the same year, the ratio of the two school types was reversed. In 1881, there were 14 private schools, one governmental school (*kangaku*),⁹ and 158 public schools. In 1882, there were 9 private schools, one governmental school, and 163 public schools, showing the rapid decline in the number of private schools. 1881 saw the promulgation of the “Educational Principles for Middle Schools” (*Chūgakkō kyōsoku taikō*) by the central government. Article 1 stipulated that “these schools provide instruction in advanced general education and teach subjects necessary for advanced professions and for admittance to higher schools (*kōtō no gakkō*)” (see also Yomo, 2004). The *Ninth Annual Report* of 1881 stated, “Is not the impact of education vast if graduates [of middle schools] all become above average and turn into gentlemen (*jinshi*) who are supporting pillars of the state, such as becoming at once self-reliant in society and dedicating themselves to public affairs or engaging in further lofty scholarship (*gakugei*) in expectation of future great achievements.” (Monbushō, 1881, 17–8). This passage expresses the expectation that middle school graduates will occupy a position above the middle class and work hard to expand the prosperity and power of the state. It was inevitable that private middle schools rooted in local society that sought to cultivate local citizens (*shimin*) were excluded from this vision.

The Municipal Meishinkan Middle School established the four disciplines of literature, English, mathematics, and drawing, thereby providing a “general education” (*futsū gakka*) based on original texts that went beyond elementary education. Its defining feature was that the school

had also established an advanced studies track (physics and chemistry, agriculture, zoology and botany, geology, etc.) as stipulated by the *Gakusei*, and provided specialized education in a higher middle school program (*kōtō chūgaku*) that led directly on to university. The school introduced the subject “literature” (*bungaku*) instead of “national language” (*kokugo*) and taught Japanese scriptures and classical Chinese texts in non-conformation with the *Gakusei*, which emphasized a Western-style of education and demonstrates a willingness to implement a unique local approach to the cultivation of “citizens” (*shimin*) (Monbushō, 1879, 244–5).

10. Conclusion—From “Citizen” (*Shimin*) to “National Subject” (*Kokumin*)

The “*futsū no gaku*” established at middle schools in the Fukui domain provided their students with basic knowledge widely incorporating civilian and military subjects. While the initial intention was the creation of modern schools that combined civilian and military education and drew on the school regulations of the Numazu Military Academy and Prussia, they later turned into “civilian” (*bun*) schools dedicated to the cultivation of a new “citizenry”, following the dissolution of the occupational monopoly previously held by the samurai class over administrative and military posts. This can be regarded as an attempt to infuse education with the principle of egalitarianism by means of a thorough reform of the consciousness of the *samurai* class. Disciples of Yokoi Shōnan had already advanced a type of education for citizens that focused on public debate (*kōron*) at the local schools (*gōgakusho*). Fukui domain looked to Nishi Amane’s “common science” (*futsūgaku*) to provide the content of this education for its new “citizenry.” Nishi’s “common science” consisted of general cultivation for citizens in support of the modern state, or in other words, it was a system of learning that corresponded to the Western tradition of liberal education.

After the abolition of the domains and the establishment of the prefectures, the central government expressed concern over the administration of the territory of Fukui prefecture. However, since there had been an atmosphere in favor of public debate since the time of the domainal government, Yamada Taketoshi, a former student of Yokoi Shōnan, was appointed as provisional governor of the unified Tsuruga prefecture. The work done by Yamada in the improvement of the educational environment, the enactment of the “Regulations for Public Schools” (*Kōgaku kisoku*), and the improvements made in the education law, such as the establishment of an education council, contributed to encouraging school attendance. What set Fukui apart and ahead of the central government and other prefectures was that the “Regulations for Public Schools” stipulated severe penalties for those who deprived children of their “right to attend school.” The introduction of a process of reaching decisions through deliberation on the prefectural level was ground-breaking, but with Yamada’s transfer to a different post the influence of his efforts slowly waned. In 1881, Fukui prefecture was established and the private Meishinkan Middle School became the Prefectural Fukui Middle School. The early beginnings of an educational “reform from below” as seen in the case of Fukui prefecture came to a halt as the central government gradually increased its control over prefectural educational policies. Important in this regard are in particular the “Educational Principles for Middle Schools” of 1881 and the “School Orders” (*Shōgakkō rei*) for elementary and middle schools, as well as the universities of 1886. With the progress of administrative centralization at the hands of the government, a definite shift from the localized cultivation of education can clearly be seen.

Notes

1. Currently, there is not much scholarship providing an overview of these local education systems before and after the *Gakusei*. See Bakumatsu-ishin-kenkyūkai (Ed.) (1996). *Bakumatsu-ishinki ni okeru "Gakko" no soshikika* (Organization of "Schools" at the end of the Edo and the beginning of the Meiji period), Tokyo: Taga Shuppan.
2. Takeda Kōji investigated the notion of "general education" (*futsū kyōiku*) at the end of the Edo period and beginning of the Meiji period from a conceptual and policy-centered perspective. Kumazawa Eriko provides an overview of the existing literature about the *futsūgaku* and *futsū kyōiku* of the time in chapter five of her book.
3. The text of the document can be found transcribed in its entirety in "Kafu" 235 (held by Fukui City History Museum), entry for the Thirtieth day of the fifth month of 1871.
4. "Meiji 4 nen Nisshi", Miyazima Seiichiro Monjo, held by Waseda University Library.
5. See Yamada Taketoshi's "Kinroku no gi kenpaku" held by the National Archives of Japan.
6. Mikami kazuo has pointed out that Yamada Taketoshi established a prefectural assembly (*kenkai*) and "dedicated himself to incorporating as much as possible the popular will into the administration of the prefecture" (Mikami. K. (1996). Meiji zenki, Echizen/Kumamoto no jiyū minken undo ni miru Yokoi Shōnan rosen. *Fukui kogyō daigaku kenkyū kiyō* 26-2. 73-4)
7. "Kōgaku Kisoku", Meiji 8 nen Tsuruga-ken Fureisho 7, held by Fukui Prefectural Archives.
8. See the *Seisai nisshi* held by Ōno City Historical Museum. Information of the *Seisai nisshi* is on Yanagisawa, F. (2012). Gakku torishimari Yoshida Setsuzō no "Seisai Nisshi": Fukui ken Ōno gunka no Gakuseiki shogakko no sōsetsu katei (The *Seisai Diary* of Setsuzo Yoshida, a Superintendent of School Districts under the First Educational System in Japan). *Fukui ken Bunshokan Kenkyū kiyō* 9. 71-91. http://www.archives.pref.fukui.jp/fukui/08/2011bulletin/kiyou9_yanagi.pdf
9. "Governmental School" (*Kanritsu*) refers here to the Ōsaka Middle School (the former Osaka senmon gakko), which was under the direct supervision of the Ministry of Education.

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